

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 /031 W
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O R 151110Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5190
USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN UNN
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SCUL, GE
SUBJECT: STATUS US CULTURAL PROGRAMS

REF: STATE 160660

SUMMARY: MFA IS ENTHUSIASTIC OVER PRESIDENT CARTER'S
REPLY TO HONECKER'S JULY 4 MESSAGE. CANCELLATION OF
PHIL ARTE QUARTET AND POSTPONEMENT INDUSTRIAL DESIGN
EXHIBIT DESCRIBED AS NON-POLITICAL AND FOR REASONS OF
TIMING AND ATTENDANCE. NEW DATES AND VENUES PROPOSED
FOR BOTH. WHILE NO WORD AS YET ON PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBIT
AND DHEW SCHOLARS, MFA WILL CONSIDER NEW US PROPOSAL FOR
FILM RETROSPECTIVE THIS YEAR. END SUMMARY.

1. PAO MADE TWO CALLS AT MFA JULY 14, FIRST AT HIS
REQUEST WITH DR. BETTIN OF CULTURAL SECTION, AND SECOND
AT REQUEST OF US DESK OFFICER DRUDE TO DISCUSS INDUSTRIAL
DESIGN EXHIBIT. BETTIN WAS IN EXPANSIVE MOOD BECAUSE
OF FRONT-PAGE PLAY AND CONTENT OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S
MESSAGE TO HONECKER, AND WENT ON FOR SOME TIME DES-
CRIBING IT AS A "NEW IMPULSE" IN US-GDR RELATIONS TO
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WHICH MFA WAS REACTING WITH ENTHUSIASM AND WITH
EXPECTATIONS OF STILL BETTER BILATERAL RELATIONS.

2. PAO REPLIED THAT TO DATE THERE APPEARED BE LITTLE
SUBSTANCE TO GDR CLAIMS PUBLICIZED IN THE AMERICAN
PRESS THAT THE GDR WISHED TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND
RELATIONS, ESPECIALLY IN THE CULTURAL FIELD, AND THAT

WHILE THE GDR AIDE-MEMOIRE OF MAY 12 GIVEN TO THE CHAR
OLISTED A NUMBER OF CULTURAL PROPOSALS, THE GDR
DID NOT SEEM PREPARED TO IMPLEMENT THEM. HENCE THE
REASON FOR THE MEETING, SPECIFICALLY TO DISCUSS THE
CANCELLATION OF PHIL ARTE QUARTET WHICH, TAKEN
TOGETHER WITH POSTPONEMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN
EXHIBIT, APPEARED NOT TO SUPPORT GDR PRONOUNCEMENTS
ON CLOSER RELATIONS, AND IN FACT POINTED TO A
COOLER PERIOD AHEAD.

3. BETTIN SAID THAT CONTENT OF A JULY 6
CHARGE-GEYER DISCUSSION HAD BEEN CONVEYED TO HIM
DURING WHICH US DISSATISFACTION WITH GDR HANDLING
OF BOTH EVENTS HAD BEEN NOTED. BETTIN SAID HE
AWARE THAT PAO WOULD BE DISCUSSING INDUSTRIAL
DESIGN MATTER IN MEETING TO FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY,
THEREFORE WOULD CONFINE HIMSELF TO PHIS ARTE PROBELM.
HE REFERRED FIRST TO FRANK DISCUSSION HELD DURING JULY
4 RECEPTION AT WHICH PAO HAD TOLD SMALL CIRCLE
OFFICIALS - BETTIN, MINCULT'S MINDL AND MINHIGHE'S
KINDZORRA - THAT GDR INABILITY GET US CULTURAL PROGRAMS
OFF GROUND GAVE IMPRESSION FOOT-DRAWING AND HEAVY-
HANDED BUREAUCRACY WHICH COUNTERED IMPROVED BY GDR.
BETTIN SAID POINT WAS WELL TAKEN BUT RECALLED THAT ALL
THREE INSISTED NEGATIVE DECISIONS OR POSTPONEMENTS WERE
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NOT OF POLITICAL NATURE, AND BETTIN WISHED NOW TO RE-
ITERATE POINT. HE THEN WENT INTO ELABORATE BUT NOT
UNCONVINCING ARGUMENTS FOR WHAT HE TERMED "TEMPORARY
CANCELLATION" OF PHIL ARTE PROVIDED MOSTLY, HE SAID,
BY HEAD OF GDR ARTISTS AGENCY FALK: SHORT-NOTICE DID
NOT ALLOW FOR ADEQUATE CONCERT HALLS; 60TH ANNIVERSARY
OCTOBER REVOLUTION BOOKED HEAVILY; TOURS FOR ALL
MUSICAL GROUPS PLANNED AT LEAST SIX MONTHS USUALLY ONE
YEAR IN ADVANCE; FALK COULD ARRANGE SPECIAL PLAN FOR
PHIL ARTE BUT WITH CERTAINTY OF POOR TURNOUT, WHICH
WOULD BE UNFAVORABLY VIEWED BY BOTH SIDES.

4. THEREFORE, BETTIN SAID, BECAUSE THE MATTER HAS BEEN
GIVEN LENGTHY AND CONSIDERED ATTENTION AND THE GDR WANTS
IT TO BE A SUCCESS, THE FOLLOWING NEW PROPOSAL IS MADE:
THE PHIL ARTE QUARTET IS INVITED TO THE GDR FOR A SIX-CITY
TOUR IN 1978, PERFORMING ONE CONCERT IN EACH CITY, DURING THE
BERLIN CULTURAL FESTIVAL (IN EAST BERLIN KNOWN AS
THE FESTTAG) IN OCTOBER. THE TERMS SHALL BE AS
ALREADY DISCUSSED. THE GDR REQUESTS THAT THE
MENDELSSOHN STRING QUARTET MAKE A COMPARABLE TOUR IN
THE UNITED STATES, POSSIBLY AT THE TIME WHEN THE

DRESDEN ART EXHIBITION OPENS IN WASHINGTON. PAO SAID
PROPOSAL WOULD BE TRANSMITTED FOR DEPARTMENT'S CON-
SIDERATION.

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5. ASKED ABOUT STATUS PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBIT, BETTIN
SAID NO NEW WORD AS YET ON "REFLECTIONS", BUT GDR
HOPED STILL GET PAUL STRAND. PROMISED EARLY RESPONSE.

6. ASKED ABOUT LONG-STANDING REQUEST FOR APPROVAL
DHEW/OE CANDIDATES, BETTIN SAID MINHIGHED STILL
QUESTIONING NEED FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH OUTSIDE FRAME-
WORK IREX AND HOPED THAT ALL SUCH PROGRAMS COULD BE
TAKEN OUT OF IREX MAN/MONTHS. PAO SINGLED OUT PARA 21
NEW AGREEMENT WHICH CALLS FOR COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE
OUTSIDE AGREEMENT AND WONDERED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO STEADY
STREAM GDR SCHOLARS VISITING US UNIVERSITIES IF AMERICAN
SIDE INSISTED TIME COME OUT OF IREX AGREEMENT. BETTIN
SAID HE UNDERSTOOD POINT AND WOULD DISCUSS AGAIN
WITH MINHIGHED, AND SAID HE HAD NOTHING ELSE REPORT.

7. PAO THEN RAISED ESSENTIAL REASON FOR MEETING -
AMERICAN FILM RETROSPECTIVE, EXPLAINING ROLE OF MPAA
AND THAT GREEN LIGHT GIVEN LAST WEEK BY EUROPEAN
DIRECTOR GRONICH (BY PHONE FROM PARIS) TO NEGOTIATE
WITH GDR ON THEATRE AND TIME, WITH VIRTUAL CERTAINTY
THAT ALMOST ALL FILMS REQUESTED WOULD BE APPROVED.
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PAO HANDED BETTIN AIDE-MEMOIRE WITH TWELVE FILM TITLES AND OTHER INFORMATION. BETTIN ASKED WHEN IT POSSIBLE FOR GDR FILM DELEGATION VISIT US AND SCREEN FILMS SO AS TO DECIDE WHICH ONES COULD BE SYNCHRONIZED FOR EVENTUAL PURCHASE. PAO REPLIED THAT BETTIN APPARENTLY FAILED UNDERSTAND THAT LONG DELAY IN ACQUIRING FILMS WAS EXACTLY FOR REASON THAT SYNCHRONIZED VERSIONS SOUGHT. IF GDR WANTED PURCHASE ANY, LOCAL SCREENING EASILY ARRANGED; ONCE GDR AGREED TO FILM WEEK, THEATRE AND SUITABLE TIME, PERHAPS OCTOBER, ONLY REMAINING PROBLEMS. BETTIN SAID MATTER NOW COMPLETELY CLEAR AND WOULD BE DISCUSSED FULLY.

8. SECOND MFA MEETING TOOK PLACE IMMEDIATELY THERE-AFTER IN PRESENCE AMERICAN DESK OFFICER AND TWO REPRESENTATIVES BUREAU INDUSTRIAL DESIGN POHL AND VOLLERT. POHL MADE FOLLOWING PRESENTATION: GDR DEEPLY REGRETTED NEED POSTPONE US INDUSTRIAL DESIGN EXHIBIT AND APOLOGIZED FOR INCONVENIENCE TO FIVE PROFESSORS AND TO EXHIBIT OFFICIALS; DECISION WAS NOT POLITICAL BUT BASED ON MISJUDGMENT SIZE OF GDR AUDIENCE IN AUGUST FOR SUCH SPECIALIZED THEME WHICH MIGHT NOT EXCEED TWENTY-FIVE EXPERTS; GDR WANTED SUCH VALUABLE EXHIBIT AND EXPERTISE EXPOSED TO MUCH LARGER PROFESSIONAL GROUPS; AUGUST DATES THEREFORE UNSUITABLE AND EFFORT AND EXPENSE TO US HARDLY JUSTIFIED. POHL MADE NEW PROPOSAL: EITHER APRIL 17-21, 1978 FOR BOTH EXHIBIT AND SEMINAR, OR AFTER SEPTEMBER, 1978 WITH BOTH TIME-FRAMES NEGOTIABLE DEPENDING ON CONVENIENCE TO US PROFESSORS. WHEN ASKED IF DRESDEN WERE STILL SITE OF EXHIBIT, POHL SAID HE REGRETTED NOT HAVING MADE CLEAR AT OUTSET THAT DRESDEN NON LONGER IN PICTURE, AND THAT TWO NEW AND FAR MORE FAVORABLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POSSIBILITIES HAD EMERGED - IN BERLIN AT THE KUNST-HOCHSCHULE, OR IN DESSAU AT THE BAUHAUS, WHICH IS BEING RESTORED. PAO WELCOMED BOTH AND SAID PROPOSAL WOULD BE PASSED ON FOR CONSIDERATION. POHL ALSO GAVE COPY JUNE 27 LETTER TO ARTHUR PULOS CONTAINING SOME OF FOREGOING AND SIGNED BY WOLFGANG SCHMIDT OF GDR INDUSTRIAL DESIGN BUREAU.

9. COMMENT: EMBASSY CANNOT KNOW PRECISELY WHY GDR CHANGING ITS MIND SO OFTEN ON ACCEPTING US CULTURAL PROGRAMS, BUT LATEST CYCLE APPEARS BE

POSITIVE WITH NEW AND EXPANDED TOUR OF PHIL ARTE AND MORE FAVORABLE TIME AND SITE INDUSTRIAL DESIGN EXHIBIT. EMBASSY'S PERSISTENT PRESSURE ON GDR OFFICIALS AND STRESSING OF CONTRAST THEIR WORDS AND DEEDS, AS WELL AS DEPARTMENT'S EFFORTS WITH GDR EMBASSY PRESUMABLY HAVE HAD SOME EFFECT. WHETHER BETTIN'S SEEMING OPTIMISM ON REALIZATION THIS YEAR OF FILM RETROSPECTIVE IS REALISTIC WILL BE KNOWN SHORTLY. EMBASSY REQUESTS INFORMATION ON STATUS FOREGOING PROJECTS IN LIGHT GDR RE-PROGRAMMING, AND SUGGESTS IF PHIL ARTE UNAVAILABLE LATE 1978, JUILLIARD STRING QUARTET BE APPROACHED. WHICHEVER IT BE, GROUP WILL BE SOLE US REPRESENTATIVE IN CULTURAL FESTIVAL DOMINATED BY HIGH QUALITY SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN MUSICAL ENSEMBLES. ALTHOUGH GDR PROPOSALS ARE FOR 1978, EMBASSY CANNOT STRESS STRONGLY ENOUGH NEED FOR PROMPT US RESPONSE. EMBASSY ALSO URGES INTENSIFIED EFFORT BE MADE FIND NAME WRITER FOR SEMINAR ON AMERICAN LITERATURE. POLANSKY

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